

awarded since November 1989. The military is growing yet another generation of veterans and retirees who have served their country when their country called upon them.

I commend the MHSS for their advances in a standard benefit for all beneficiaries, for their commitment to medical advances such as telemedicine, and for the hard work in which they are engaged as they attempt to right size military health care. However, I caution them that I am watching. I will not tolerate a health care system sized on the backs of our retirees, a system that listens more to shortsighted budget analysts than to good business practices, and to any contract that violates the contract this country made with the men and women who served when called and have already paid their dues.

Madam President, the real bottom line is that the overall health of the entire voluntary military depends on the health of the Defense Health Program. A compromised military health system will rapidly lead to a compromised military capability. I greatly fear that we are heading down that course. For example, I find it truly alarming that for the first time in our Nation's history, the emergency defense supplemental bill is being offset dollar for dollar from its own defense budget. How long will it be before the Department gets wise and when the President says go to Haiti or Bosnia or wherever, the military says, "No, thank you, we can't afford it". I have been involved in our Nation's defense for more than 30 years as a Member of Congress and I have traveled extensively around the world during those many years and I absolutely believe that the best way to prevent war is to prepare for war. The only way to prepare for war is to maintain a healthy, robust military. And absolutely critical to that endeavor is a healthy, robust military medical health system. Let us not forget the painful lessons learned in the past; let us not have another Task Force Smith; let us not repeat the same mistakes. Let us work to ensure a safe and secure future for this great Nation of ours.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of my Congressional Nurse Fellow, Lt. Col. Barbara Scherb, who prepared this statement. Colonel Scherb is an Army nurse who is currently assigned on a 1-year fellowship in my office.

#### REPRESENTATIVE RICHARDSON'S SUCCESSFUL HUMANITARIAN MISSION TO IRAQ

Mr. BINGAMAN. Madam President, on another issue, I rise to congratulate my friend and colleague from New Mexico, Representative BILL RICHARDSON, for his recent trip to Iraq that resulted in the early release from prison of two Americans, David Daliberti and William Barloon.

Madam President, we have all been affected by this story. We agonized with the families of these two Americans since their arrest in March when they inadvertently crossed the Iraqi border while trying to visit friends at the United Nations observer post in Kuwait. We recoiled when we learned that their sentence would be 8 years in prison. We watched as others tried to negotiate a solution to the crisis, including the wives of Mr. Daliberti and Mr. Barloon, who visited their husbands in a Baghdad prison. And we worried as a nation when we received reports that both men were experiencing heart trouble that required hospitalization while in the prison.

We have now learned, however, that Representative RICHARDSON has been doing more than simply listening to the news coming out of Iraq like most of the rest of us. He met eight times with the Iraqi Ambassador to the United Nations in New York, sometimes catching a flight from Washington early in the morning so that he could return before votes were cast in the House.

These visits established a feeling of trust that allowed Representative RICHARDSON to travel to Iraq, where he pressed Saddam Hussein for the release of the captive Americans on humanitarian grounds. As with any negotiation, we now know that there were moments of disagreement and misunderstanding with the Iraqi President. Representative RICHARDSON persisted in arguing that releasing these men at this time was the right thing to do.

Madam President, in a world with a seemingly endless number of intractable conflicts and troubles, from Bosnia to Rwanda to North Korea, it is with a sense of relief that as a result of Representative RICHARDSON's successful humanitarian mission to Iraq, we have one less crisis hanging over our country and over the two families that have now been reunited.

All Americans should be proud of Mr. Daliberti and Mr. Barloon for their courage and strength over the past 5 months. I am especially proud of my friend and colleague from my home State of New Mexico for his remarkable achievement in winning their release.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

#### COMPREHENSIVE REGULATORY REFORM ACT

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, on a matter that the Senate has been debating over the period of the last 9 days, regulatory reform bill, it has been temporarily laid aside for now, but I rise at this time to call the attention of my colleagues that the bill contains an unfortunate and unwarranted provision that would drastically undermine fundamental food safety standards in current law. I intended to offer this amendment yesterday prior to the time that the bill was set aside.

I want to speak briefly to this issue. I hope the issue would have been addressed by those in the process of considering the regulatory reform bill, or have an opportunity to address it when the legislation comes back. It addresses one of the very serious failings of this legislation. I want to take a few moments of the Senate time to address it.

This is a different issue than the meat inspection question we debated last week. It involves the unfortunate and unwarranted provision that would drastically undermine the fundamental food safety standards that exist in current law.

America has the safest food supply in the world. Families go to a supermarket to purchase meat or vegetables, to buy baby food or apple sauce for young children they do so, secure in the knowledge that what they buy, and any additives contained in them, meet strict safety standards enforced by the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration.

When contaminated food inadvertently reaches the public, these agencies have the power they need to protect the public health. The basic food safety standards were enacted into law many years ago. Today, they are relied on and taken for granted by the American public. That is absolutely how it should be. No one has to give a second thought to the safety of the food that they eat today—and they should not have to start to worry about it tomorrow.

The safety of American food not only benefits consumers, it provides a competitive advantage to the U.S. food industry in the global markets. The label "Made in the USA" on a can or jar of food is a signal to people everywhere that the product meets the highest standards of safety and cleanliness.

Two of the cornerstones of the Federal food safety law are contained in section 409 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. The relevant language of that section reads as follows: A food additive shall not be approved "if a fair evaluation of the data before the Secretary fails to establish that the proposed use of the food additive, under the conditions of the use to be specified in the regulation, will be safe: Provided, that no additive shall be deemed to be safe if it is found to induce cancer in man or animal \* \* \*."

This provision is known as the Delaney clause. This simple statement is the basis for the establishment of safety for the food supply in the United States. These two provisions together deal with food safety and also the limitation of carcinogens in pesticides, in food coloring, and in other areas as well, but food additives primarily.

What we have done in this proposal that is before the Senate is changed both of these standards. I wonder why? I wonder where the call is across the country for people that say our food is too safe? I think few would ever have had the circumstance where anyone